

DesignInc

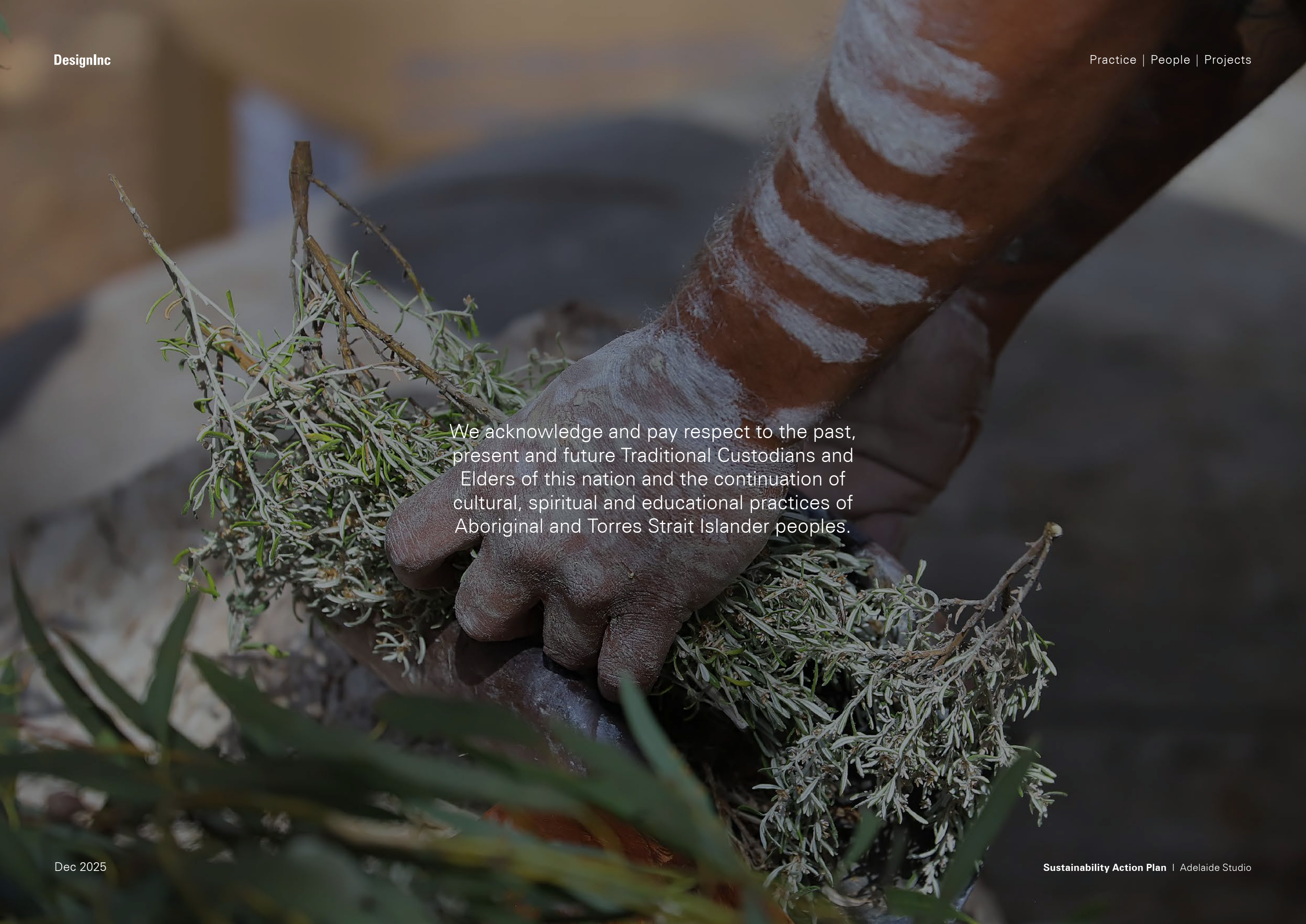
Architecture
Urban Design
Interiors
Landscape
designinc.com.au

Sustainability Action Plan

Adelaide Studio

Dec 2025

Sustainability Action Plan | Adelaide Studio



We acknowledge and pay respect to the past, present and future Traditional Custodians and Elders of this nation and the continuation of cultural, spiritual and educational practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Introduction

At DesignInc, we design with people at the forefront of everything we do. We strive to design environments which support positive outcomes both for the end user and the environment.

Australia's built environment is responsible for one-fifth of the nation's emissions.¹ Globally the sector accounts for nearly 40% of global energy-related CO2 emissions, 50% of extracted materials and one third of global waste.

To respond to these challenges, DesignInc Adelaide has developed our first Sustainability Action Plan (SAP) to address our significant responsibility to understand the current impacts within the building industry and take steps to improve them.

As a national brand, DesignInc has signed the Architects Declare Declaration², joining the initiative to support our industry in making positive change.

In addition, our studio has set benchmarks to hold ourselves accountable and encourage others.

¹ [Infrastructure Australia](#)

² [Architects Declare](#)

Our Plan

Our Vision and Mission

Our Goals

Our Practice Targets

Our Project Targets

Our Design Approach

Our Road Map

Our Accountability

Our Timeline of Responsibility

Our Sustainability Vision

Designing for people, place, and planet to ensure every project leaves our community better, greener, and more resilient.

Our Sustainability Mission

Environmental Sustainability

- Designing with intention - projects to have a positive impact on the natural environment.
- Protect nature and improve biodiversity through the integration of Nature Based Solutions and investment in Nature Capital.
- Reduce harmful impact through design and specification.

Economic Sustainability

- Business and projects that are run effectively to contribute to the economy and support our staff and communities.
- Projects that contribute to and support a vibrant local economy.

Social Sustainability

- Projects have a positive impact on the end user, local neighbourhoods and wider communities.
- Consider the physical, mental and social well-being of our staff and wider communities.

Climate Resilience

- Understand and mitigate through design, the impacts of climate change, including floods, drought, and urban heat.

Our Goals

DesignInc Adelaide has identified four core goals that will assist us on our journey towards Net Zero Carbon Emissions.

Educate

Educate our staff and inform our clients on the importance of creating environmentally and socially sustainable projects.



Initiate

Develop and implement processes and procedures within our studio to measure progress and hold ourselves accountable.



Advocate

Advocate and drive change within the industry through our leadership and collaboration with our clients and industry partners.



Evaluate

Evaluate where we sit within our sustainability journey and determine where we need to focus education to reinforce our commitment to the declaration.



Our Practice Targets

Sustainable Practice Targets currently being implemented as part of our SAP.



Sustainability Working Group

A practice-wide Sustainability Working Group, with input from all levels of staff, has been formed to develop studio wide sustainability standards, educate staff and assist the studio to achieve our sustainability goals.



Reducing Carbon

DesignInc has been Carbon Neutral since 2020, with both our organisation and all services we provide now accredited as carbon neutral with Climate Active.



Reducing Fuel Use

We have reduced the number of studio vehicles, instead investing in an electric vehicle for staff to use to commute to site visits and client meetings. Uber Green (or EV equivalent) has been made the preferred mode of transport when the studio car is unavailable.



Reducing Waste

Our practice is always improving waste management. We minimise printing, encouraging re-use when possible, composting, and recycling.



Sharing our Vision

We openly communicate our Net Zero targets within the studio and to our clients, stimulating discussion and raising awareness of the part we all must play in achieving our goals.

Our Practice Targets

Proposed Practice Targets to be implemented as part of our SAP.

Where we are heading:



2026

- Publish the Sustainability Action Plan.
- Establish opportunities for sustainability reviews as part of our existing internal quality review processes.
- Identify suitable training and offer to employees throughout the business at all levels to improve understanding of sustainable design practices.
- Actively seek to continue to reduce our carbon emissions annually.
- Reduce office energy usage, encourage staff to turn off devices when not in use.
- Encourage staff to share transport where possible, and reduce unnecessary journeys.
- Focus on recycling equipment and samples in studio to reduce landfill impact.
- Establishment of a sustainable design process and framework, to provide project guidance on sustainable design practices.

2030

- Incorporate sustainability reviews, including carbon reduction checkpoints within our internal quality review processes.
- Reduce our total carbon emissions by 50% from 2020 baseline.
- Engage only with providers that align with our carbon neutral goals.
- Utilise existing and independently maintained databases of sustainable material as a guide to supplier sustainability credentials.
- Minimise consumable and appliance purchasing, seek local suppliers.
- Maintain carbon neutral status, by continuing to measure and reduce our carbon emissions through the Climate Active Scheme.

Our Project Targets

Sustainable Project Targets currently being implemented as part of our SAP.



Sustainable Principles

Ingrain sustainable design practice in all our projects. Advocate and strive for the best sustainable outcomes within each projects framework and lead discussion from project inception. Demonstrate our strengths and advocacy within our project submissions.



Reuse

Investigate opportunities for reuse and recycling within all projects. Advocate to our clients the benefits and importance of reuse when considering project outcomes not limited to but including existing buildings, fixtures and furniture.



Minimising Operational Carbon

Research and apply best practice as a baseline within our current Design and Technical Excellence working groups. Review and interrogate our projects to minimise operational energy use.



Water and Energy Consumption

Reviewing current practices to design with sustainability in front of mind and working closely with engineers to incorporate water and energy consumption best practice into all projects, including or prioritising WSUD.



Materiality Selection

Scrutinise all material and finishes selections throughout the design process. Utilise existing databases to assist in our research of product selections that minimise carbon impact and maximise our influence on sustainable supply chains.

Our Project Targets

Proposed Project Targets to be implemented as part of our SAP.

Where we are heading:

2026

- Incorporate SAP principles within current Design and Technical Excellence Working Groups. SAP working group to identify key continuing professional development (CPD) sessions to collectively upskill the entire studio.
- Develop return brief strategies to discuss and set low-carbon design targets and goals in all projects, promoting 'whole-Life carbon' thinking.
- Collaborate with builders, engineers and contractors to understand how construction waste can be reduced and recycled.
- Contribute to the Supplier Aware platform suggesting products and materials with good sustainable practices.

2030

- Integration of sustainable design principles and processes into all projects.
- Integrate post-occupancy evaluations into our services and encourage and inform our clients of benefits during design phases.
- Advocate and exceed industry leading building performance targets.
- Integrate Environment Product Declaration statistics into BIM environment and libraries.
- Apply whole of life carbon assessment to all projects.
- Measure / quantify operational carbon using pre-construction assessment tools.

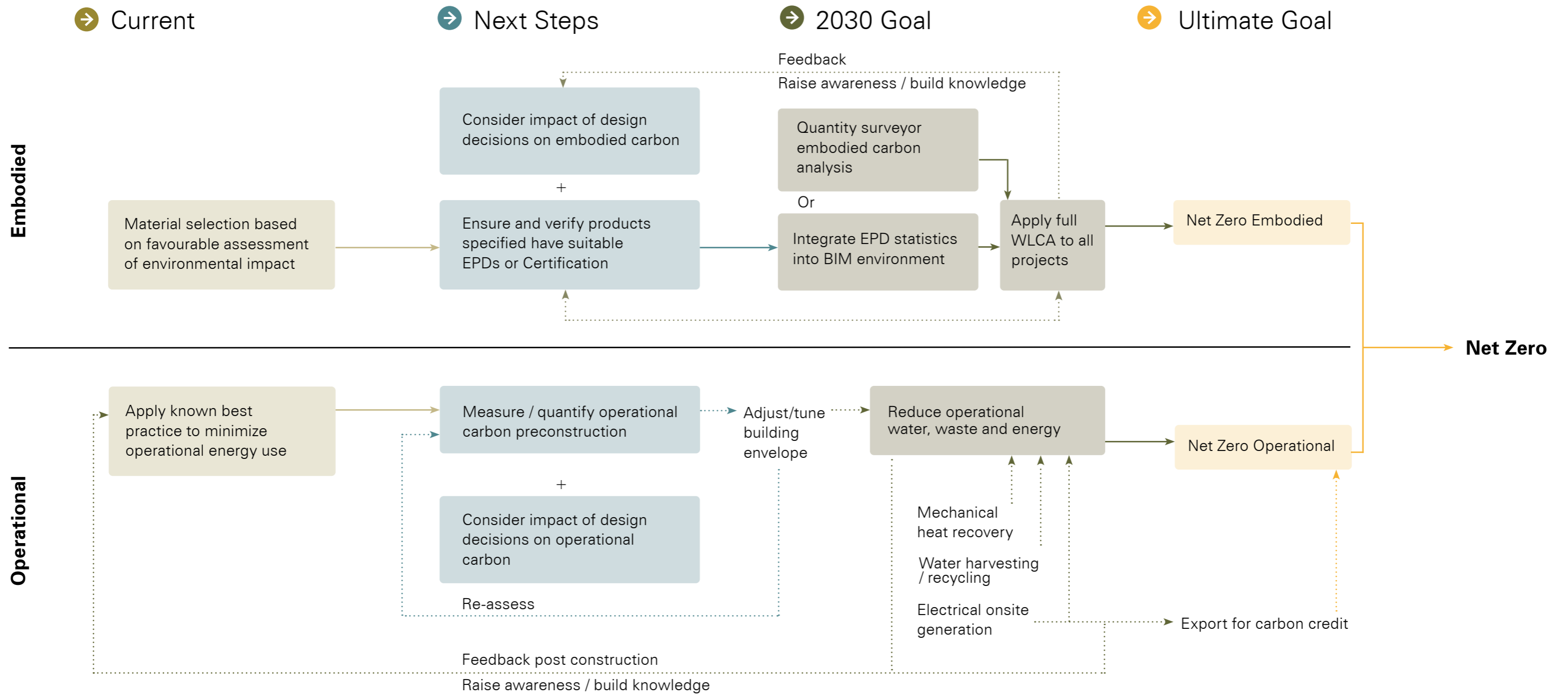
Our Design Approach

Our design approach is guided by understanding and communicating the opportunities within each individual project. It is through these discussions we can achieve our Net Zero aspirations.

As a studio, our design approach is to minimise energy consumption and waste, specifying locally sourced, environmentally responsible materials. We balance design decisions against environmental, social and financial impacts, incorporating sustainable design methodology into all phases of the design process. We strive to design environments that are both fit for purpose and easily adaptable to suit the changing needs of the user.



Net Zero - Road Map



Our Road Map

Design Considerations

➔ First Principles

Consider the options for reuse and reutilisation of existing buildings, materials and resources.

Plan for End of Life: deconstruction and re-use of elements.

Determine clear project goals within all projects. Advocate for accountable and sustainable solutions from project inception.

➔ Concept

Building Form

Building Volume

Structural Concept

Material Selection

Local Environmental Factors:

- Orientation
- Solar Shading
- Prevailing Winds

➔ Design Development

Building Fabric

Thermal Envelope

Airtightness

Passive Heating, Cooling and Ventilation

Services Specification

Specification

Selection of Fixtures and Fittings

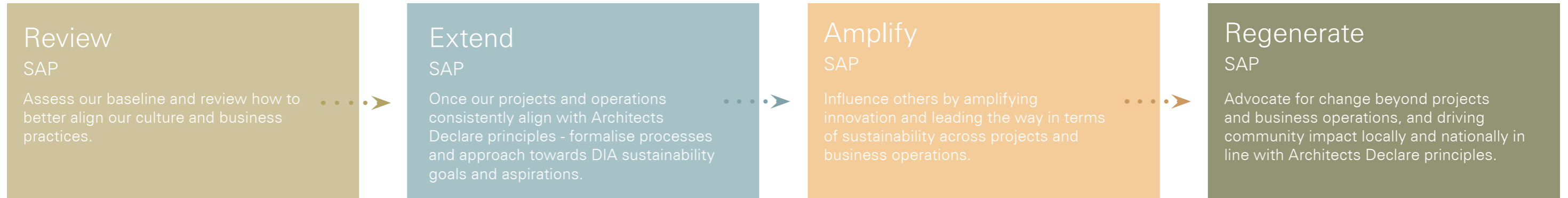
Our Accountability

Implementation and Accountability

Educate	Implement	Advocate / Champion	Evaluate
<p>Now</p> <p>20 CPD hours of training per staff member (10 formal-10 informal) to all team members within the studio.</p> <p>Technical Excellence review process.</p> <p>Design Excellence review process.</p>	<p>Now</p> <p>Incorporate a higher-than-average baseline into our specifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Improve airtightness goals and test completed building. – Set construction waste to landfill targets. recycle minimum 80% at source. – Allow budget for independent assessors. – Product substitution for more carbon neutral options. 	<p>Now</p> <p>Include and demonstrate our SAP priorities with all our project submissions / briefs.</p> <p>Advocate for sustainability with our suppliers, consultants, clients and stakeholders.</p>	<p>Now</p> <p>Critical reflection of past projects as a benchmark to learn where we can improve and where we need to tailor education in the future.</p> <p>Evaluate existing projects against SAP goals and project targets.</p>
<p>Next Steps</p> <p>Mandatory CPD sessions in house to maintain a sound understanding on the SAP goals.</p> <p>Offer sustainability specific CPD sessions to staff.</p> <p>Improve staff awareness, understanding and adoption of the tools needed to meet our net zero objective through the development and implementation of a Sustainable Design Framework.</p>	<p>Next Steps</p> <p>Interrogate the built fabric of existing projects using Life Cycle Analysis tools. Use as a benchmark for improvement moving forward.</p> <p>Initiate a review process / proforma incorporating the SAP targets within current Design and Technical Excellence workshops and review.</p>	<p>Next Steps</p> <p>Publish and share our performance data with our national partners, Industry professionals and wider community.</p> <p>Include sustainability workshops within our consultation process.</p>	<p>Next Steps</p> <p>Benchmark existing projects against proposed Sustainable Design Framework.</p>
<p>2030 Goal</p> <p>Increase the number of staff certified by an official sustainability accreditation program.</p>	<p>Future</p> <p>Use Sustainable Design Framework to specify in line with best practice as per with SAP.</p>	<p>Future</p> <p>Continue to maintain our Carbon Neutral accreditation whilst progressively reducing our need for carbon offsets.</p>	<p>Future</p> <p>Review our SAP yearly, review how we are tracking towards our goals. Evaluate the success and update projects accordingly.</p>

Our Timeline of Responsibility

In alignment with our goals, we will seek to continually reassess, evaluate and reflect on progress in order to develop our Sustainability Action Plans in line with Architects Declare principles.



**Commitment to our
sustainable actions starts with
our current economic, social
and environmental practices.**



Adelaide

Our studio is on Kaurna land.

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